

Edwards Coordinates with Governor Perry and Centers for Disease Control To Better Prepare Local Communities Against Swine Flu

(Washington, D.C.) – United States Representative Chet Edwards today spoke to Governor Perry about state and federal preparations to for the potential spread of the H1N1 flu virus. Edwards' office has also been in regular contact with Centers for Disease Control, (CDC), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Texas Public Safety Office, and Texas Department of State Health Services to open lines of communication and coordinate activities between federal, state, and local officials.

"My office will continue to be in contact with the Governor's office, Centers for Disease Control, and the appropriate federal and state agencies to ensure our communities remain safe and informed," said Edwards. "The most important thing citizens can do right now is to remain calm, take normal health precautions, and follow the advice of local health officials."

Basic Health Tips:

- Follow standard precautions to reduce the spread of any respiratory illness.
- Stay Informed.
- Stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.
- Cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Develop a family emergency plan as a precaution. This should include storing a supply of food, medicines, facemasks, alcohol-based hand rubs and other essential supplies.

General Procedures for Communities with Outbreaks:

1.) CDC strongly recommends dismissal of students in schools and daycares affected if there is a suspected or confirmed case. 2.) For schools that are cancelled, CDC strongly encourages parents to monitor that students do not congregate in social settings. 3.) Large social gatherings should be cancelled.

General Information for Local Communities:

1) Texas has a pandemic flu plan and local communities are working closely with Texas State Health Department. 2) CDC has sent 25 percent of their stockpile of Tamiflu to states infected with swine flu. 3) CDC strongly recommends home isolation of cases for those who develop symptoms and minimizing their contacts

Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people. People with swine influenza virus infection should be considered potentially

contagious as long as they are symptomatic and possible for up to 7 days following illness onset. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

Symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to those of regular or seasonal flu and include fever, fatigue, lack of appetite and coughing. Some with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Individuals with flu-like symptoms should call the state's swine flu call center at 888-777-5320. For health care providers with questions about assessing, evaluating and treating swine flu, call 877-623-6274. These lines are operational from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. For additional information on the swine flu, please visit: www.dshs.state.tx.us/swineflu or www.cdc.gov/swineflu/.